

veteran in this circumstance. Use the phone. Use your pen for an executive order and fix this. It is not the words, Mr. President—we are all frustrated, and we are all infuriated by this—but it is actions. These are members of the military, men and women who have served, men and women of action. Words are cheap, Mr. Speaker. It is actions that we require.

JFK said in one of his speeches that a nation is revealed by whom it honors. What is revealed by what is happening now, what has been happening, and what hasn't been happening?

Now, just to kind of show where our priorities are, let's talk about what you can get with an access card. This gentleman I am reading about bought a swordfish steak at \$18.99 a pound or went to the gourmet coffee section and ground up some roasted fresh beans. I guess it is okay to buy your Halloween candy with an access card. We can provide an access card for that, but we can't find a way to provide for the veterans who took an oath?

Mr. Speaker, they said:

I will defend this country, I will lay my life down, and I won't question. Mine is not to ask why, mine is to do or die.

Our side of the deal is that we pay, we equip you, and prepare you to fight and win, and after you come home all busted up and changed, we will take care of you.

Oh, that is what we say, but apparently that is not what we do. We can find a way to pay for these things, but not for that obligation.

Mr. Speaker, resignation is fine. But that is not going to fix it. We request the administration to take action and fix it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

CONSTITUENTS FACING DEPORTATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, like a lot of Americans, I spent time traveling this past holiday weekend, but I never made it to the beach. Instead, I did what I do on a lot of weekends, which is travel the country building support for comprehensive immigration reform.

I attended immigration events in Orange County and Riverside County in California, and, yesterday, I was in Richmond, Virginia, in the majority leader's backyard, listening to his constituents plead for congressional action.

One young lady told her story perfectly in two languages. She came to the United States when she was 6. Now she has deferred action and temporary protection from deportation but wants a permanent solution for herself and her U.S. citizen sister. Another woman, a mom of two U.S. citizen children, wore a GPS anklet bracelet to the

event and asked me how I could help her keep her family together. She has an order of deportation for June 6.

They were pleading with the majority leader—who holds the key to the schedule and the calendar in the House—to please schedule a vote, just a simple vote on immigration reform. So far, he has refused to allow a vote.

The stories from his constituents were heartbreaking: moms whose only wish is to remain here and raise their U.S. children and not fear a deportation date or a knock on the door at dawn. Children want their moms and dads to be here to see them achieve the American Dream.

But I have to say that I had a heavy heart even before I arrived at the State capitol building in Richmond, Virginia, yesterday. The night before, I received a call letting me know that the White House intended to announce yesterday that it wasn't going to take action on Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson's review of deportation policies.

Therefore, for the next several months, the deportations will continue at a rate of 1,100 a day. Moms with U.S. citizen children, women with 25 years in this country and who have committed no crimes will get no relief in the short run.

I have talked extensively with Secretary Johnson and had no illusions that a major policy announcement was in the works. Rather there are, I think, some enforcement adjustments that can be made now that would spare thousands from counterproductive deportations that are doing more harm than good to our Nation.

I am deeply disappointed that the President chose to delay any action, and I know that many of us who have been fighting against the deportations that needlessly break up families and leave communities living in fear are also disappointed.

And as I heard the stories of the constituents of the majority leader who are facing their own deportation or deportation of a loved one, I realized that it would be harder to save them in the coming weeks and months without some kind of policy adjustments revealed by the Secretary's review.

While the Republican majority decides whether or not they will act on immigration reform and solve an important American problem, thousands more will be deported.

But I also understand what the President is trying to do. He is saying that he still has hope that the Republicans are not just playing games with immigration policy. He believes, as I do, that Republicans still could use the last 14 legislative days before July 4 to make a real difference in the lives of moms and kids that I met yesterday in Richmond, Virginia.

The excuse that House Republicans can't trust President Obama to enforce the law and therefore they will not pass immigration reform, that excuse no longer holds water, if it ever did.

Yesterday, President Obama expended a great deal of political capital to give House Republicans time and space to come up with an immigration solution. It was a grand gesture on the part of the President. I know that I and a lot of my Democratic colleagues are not happy, and many in organized labor and in the pro-immigrant movement that have fought hard for policies to dial back the deportations are very, very saddened. It is not easy for a President to so fully and boldly stand up against his base, against those of us who have voted for him, loved him, and protected him, but he did it so that House Republicans could use the following weeks to take action on immigration reforms, House Republicans who have shown him nothing but disdain.

In reality, for those families facing deportation and losing their children who live in the majority leader's district, they know that both the majority leader and the President have the power to help keep them in the United States and protected with their children.

The majority leader can schedule a vote, and the President can use his pen and his phone to spare these families from what amounts to a life sentence. And of one thing I am confident: if the majority leader fails to act, the President will, and he will do so boldly.

To my House Republican colleagues, I say, please act. The country will thank you. The children and the moms that live in your districts and fear deportations will thank you, and your voters will thank you. You have 14 days to work this out.

RECOGNIZING RODNEY A. ERICKSON, PRESIDENT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rodney A. Erickson, retiring president of the Pennsylvania State University.

After 37 years at Penn State as an academic and administrator, Rodney Erickson selflessly took the role of president of the university during a troubled time. We thank him for his service, his dedication, and, most of all, his tremendous vision and leadership.

Rodney Erickson became a faculty member at Penn State in the last 1980s, and over the years, he held roles from assistant professor to dean to vice president for research, to provost and president.

At each level of service to the university, he sought new ways of teaching, better forums for learning, and innovative approaches to streamline bureaucracy and keep the university and its individual departments on the cutting edge. At every stage, he has been an inspirational leader to those around him.

A leader of and advocate for the university in countless ways, Erickson leaves behind a legacy of excellence, integrity, pride, and tireless dedication for this community to cherish and build upon for generations to come.

As a proud Penn State alumnus, I want to thank President Rodney Erickson for his commitment and his dedication to Penn State University. I also wish you and your wife, Shari, the very best with future plans for the years ahead.

YOUTH TRAFFIC SAFETY MONTH

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as well, to recognize Youth Traffic Safety Month, which is celebrated each May.

As many are aware, motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for teens. In fact, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, teenagers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers.

An even more disturbing fact is that one-third of fatal teen crashes involve a young driver who had been drinking. Also troubling is that 50 percent of high school students say they text "at least sometimes" while driving.

Now, these statistics are a stark reminder of how much more must be done to educate our kids on the privileges and responsibilities of operating a motor vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, as we begin the summer season, which is a dangerous time of year on the road for all drivers, let us reflect on these tragic statistics.

While Youth Traffic Safety Month is coming to a conclusion, let us recommit in the coming months, through advocacy, education, and awareness, to promote road safety and reduce the number of vehicle-related fatalities.

NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL MEALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, providing access to healthy school meals shouldn't be controversial. We all want what is best for our kids because nothing is more important than our children. Yet, for decades, we have seen school food products—both prepared meals and packaged snacks—fail to be as healthy and nutritious as possible. Combined with other factors, we are seeing childhood obesity rates increase over that time. Not surprisingly, we have seen other health problems associated with obesity also increase.

But that began to change because of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, also known as the child nutrition reauthorization bill, which reauthorizes our school meal programs as well as the WIC program. The 2010 bill was especially important because it implemented new health and nutrition standards for schools, including issues like sodium, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Today, the House Appro-

priations Committee will vote on waiving not just these standards, but also basic, reasonable limits on calories, fat, and trans fats.

Now, I was critical of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act not because of the change in nutritional guidelines for school meals, but because the bill cuts SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, in order to pay for these improvements. Sadly, we took food away from hungry people in order to improve the nutritional quality of school meals and improve school meal reimbursements. It was one of the more difficult votes I have taken as a Member of this House, and I am still angry that we robbed Peter to pay Paul instead of using better offsets that were available at the time.

Now, that being said, I strongly support the policies in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. And that is why I am dismayed at the attacks coming from the Republicans in Congress. House and Senate Republicans are trying to roll back many of the guidelines in this important legislation.

Now, I am aware of their concerns. Some food service providers, including in my own State, tell me that these new standards cost too much, that they lead to increased food waste, that healthier products that meet these standards aren't available, and that kids just don't eat these new foods. We should work with local providers to overcome many of those challenges.

But it is important to recognize that USDA has empirical data that shows the law is actually working. Not only that, the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, confirms that the law is working as intended and that participation will get better as kids get accustomed to healthier foods.

Harvard recently documented significant increases in children's consumption of fruits and vegetables because of the Federal school food standards. That is a good thing. Data also shows that the new school meal nutrition standards do not cause schools to lose money after they are initially established.

Most importantly, USDA has the authority to work with schools, school districts, and States to address the issues that may affect participation rates. In other words, schools, school districts, and States can ask USDA for assistance in implementing these new standards at local levels, especially when kids may not be participating locally in ways that USDA either intends or sees in other areas of the country. States and localities should take advantage of this flexibility before seeking permanent changes to the law.

These school meal standards, along with the WIC food package, are science-based. That means that politics was left out of the decision-making process and left up to expert nutritionists. The reason why white potatoes, for example, were left out of the WIC program was because the experts at the Institute of Medicine said that they do

not provide the necessary nutritional impact as other foods eligible for the WIC program do. That is another way of saying that white potatoes aren't healthy enough for pregnant mothers and young children.

Yet now the Republicans are trying to scrap these important nutrition standards. And they are doing so under the false pretense that it is what is best for the kids.

Mr. Speaker, look at the facts: House Republicans are supposedly acting on behalf of our kids while they tried to cut \$40 billion from SNAP, while they tried to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from WIC, and while they continually ignore nutritional science by changing food packages to benefit specific industries.

The truth is their position will do real harm to our Nation's kids. We can do better. We can and should work with USDA to implement this law in a smart way and not bow down to junk food special interests. We shouldn't play politics with our kids' health just because some people don't like this administration. My Republican friends should get over it.

There is a time and place for politics. But lunch is not that time, and the school cafeteria is not that place. The health of our kids should come first.

Mr. Speaker, I insert into the RECORD two letters expressing opposition to the rollback of these important nutritional standards. One is from 19 former presidents of the School Nutrition Association, and the other is from Mission Readiness, a group of retired military leaders who believe childhood obesity is a national security issue.

SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION,
PAST PRESIDENTS INITIATIVE,
May 27, 2014.

*The Honorable (Senate and House Members of
Committees on Agriculture Appropriations):*

DEAR AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE COMMITTEE: Thank you for passing the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 that is helping school nutrition programs be part of a strong response to the nation's obesity epidemic. Most schools are having success implementing the HHFKA. However some schools report difficulty meeting the requirements and are requesting waivers.

We the undersigned past presidents of the School Nutrition Association, understand that major change takes time and a commitment to the goal that prompted the change. We believe most communities and schools want school nutrition programs that help children learn to enjoy healthy foods. We are confident that the broad public support for HHFKA and USDA's demonstrated willingness to work with school leaders to solve implementation issues will prevail and create stronger school nutrition programs.

We urge you to reject calls for waivers, maintain strong standards in all schools, and direct USDA to continue working with school leaders and state directors to find ways, including technical assistance, that will ensure all schools can meet the HHFKA standards. Specific concerns regarding whole grains and sodium can be addressed as technical corrections. We must not reverse the progress that was sought by school leaders and is well on its way to success in most schools. Should you need additional information please contact Jane Wynn or Shirley Watkins.

Sincerely,